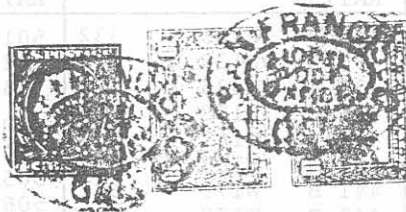


Background on U.S. Perfin Users

PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION
SAN FRANCISCO 1915
DEPARTMENT OF OFFICIAL COINS AND MEDALS
SERVICE BUILDING



The backgrounds on two U.S. Perfin users, published in the October 1978 Bulletin, appear to have been well received by members, several of whom have indicated that they would like to see more of these published. The editor, therefore, offers the following two backgrounds from his own collecting experience. Members are invited to send in data on additional firms and organizations with interesting and unusual backgrounds.

PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION CO.

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition Company was formed to manage the affairs of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, held in San Francisco from February 20 to December 4, 1915. The proposed exposition to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal had been the object of a spirited publicity battle between San Francisco, New Orleans and San Diego, each seeking to be the host city. The battle had philatelic impact in that colorful labels, postcards and illustrated covers were used for the publicity.

After San Francisco won out as the site, the theme of the exposition was expanded to include celebration of her rebuilding following the earthquake and fire of 1906.

The exposition company, anticipating the use of large quantities of postage stamps, obtained a device with which to apply a Perfin consisting of the company's initials. This PPI/ECO Perfin (P-188) is shown above. The Panama-Pacific exposition thus became the only U.S. exposition to have its own Perfin.

PPI/ECO Perfin covers mailed as ordinary letters from the exposition postal station usually bear the Model Post Office machine cancellation (International machine). However, the finest - and scarcest - Perfin covers from the exposition are registered covers bearing the corner card of the Department of Coins and Medals. These usually bear the exposition station duplex handstamp and/or its oval parcel post type handstamp tying the stamps, with the double-circle registry handstamp struck in red on the back.

The PPI/ECO Perfin could perhaps be looked upon as a forerunner of the souvenir Perfins occasionally used in connection with modern stamp exhibitions. However, the exposition company probably did not look upon it as a souvenir Perfin, but as a security device in

connection with the large quantities of stamps kept on hand for mailing out coins, medals and general correspondence.

In addition to the Panama-Pacific commemorative issues, the writer has off-cover PPI/ECO Perfins on Scott Nos. 332, 374, 406 and 427. Members who can add to this list are invited to report their holdings to the editor.